

THE MUSICAL TIMES

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| Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland (The German Fatherland) | ... | 2 6 |
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THE MUSICAL TIMES,

3rd Singing Class Circular.

NOVEMBER 1, 1870.

THE NATIONAL MUSIC OF OUR NATIVE LAND.

By G. A. MACFARREN.

(Continued from page 555.)

IN resuming this inexhaustible subject, it may be well to consider one of the chief elements of all national music, nay, of all musical composition, namely, the musical scale, its structure and its characteristics. The scale is but one of the chief elements, since rhythm, the measured division of notes and their arrangement with stronger and weaker accentuation into phrases, is another of equal importance. Again, tune and time, to use the phrenologist's definition of our musical organs, are but chief among other elements which are compounded in that most subtle of inventions, a piece of music; since the many others, which are less easy if not insusceptible of analysis, are perhaps those which constitute it a work of art and infuse it with the principles of beauty.

To speak, then, of the scale. Most readers of these remarks are supposed to have some technical knowledge of music. Some, however, may have much love and no knowledge, and some even who know most may not have turned their thoughts in the direction of which it is now to treat. These may not object to the discussion, from an unhackneyed aspect, of a most familiar subject, and the attempt to explain, by analogy with things unmusical, one of the most remarkable and most beautiful of the phenomena connected with musical sounds.

The scale consists of seven notes, which are reproduced in exact identity of relationship in higher or lower octaves, and are thus in one sense the same, while in another they are different. This wonderful fact, if comprehensible to musicians, must be inconceivable to those who have no practical acquaintance with a musical instrument, and cannot observe its illustration by the mechanical arrangement of a keyboard. It has its likeness in the division of time into weeks, each of which is a series of seven days, and every one of these seven has its appointed duties and liberties, and its consequent character. Weeks follow in the order of time as octaves range in the order of pitch; the seven days, like the seven notes, are so many individuals combined to form one period, and this period recurs again and again, never to be confounded with another, past or future, lower or higher, while the functions and distinctions of each day and note, with respect to the others, remains for ever unchanged.

We labour and we rest, we fast and we feast, and we go through the same round of occupations this week that we did last, and that we shall next, and any other week while we have the same social surroundings; we hear a melody sung or played an octave higher or lower, and it is the self-same tune though the region of sound in which it is presented be acuter or graver, as though the temporal period were more summerly or winterly.

The analogy stops not here. There is evidence that the ancient nations of the East, like the Mexicans and Peruvians when Spaniards first discovered them, like the Chinese and other Oriental peoples of the

present time, and like those early settlers in Ireland who carried their arts with their name of Scot into North Britain, had a musical scale in which—to speak of the notes in the order of ascending seconds—the third and seventh degrees were either wanting or habitually unused. The existence of pipes with finger-holes and other musical instruments whereon the other five only of the seven notes can be sounded, implies that these two were wanting in the musical system; the existence of melodies that belong to all epochs and to the regions that have been named, melodies wherein only the other five notes occur, proves that the two notes in question were then and there habitually unused. Wednesday and Saturday, the fourth and seventh days of the week, are holidays, as every schoolboy can tell you. Nay, when the pseudo age of innocence is past and the urchin takes upon him the responsibilities of manhood, early closing arrangements, and other provisions for recreating the weary spirit, temper if not annul the toils of Saturday; and this may be likened to the use of the minor seventh of the scale in place of the more poignant, sensitive, imperious leading-note, which distinguishes another class of melodies, than those constructed upon the pentatonic scale, and, perhaps, a more advanced period in art history than that when this scale may have been the only one known to the nations who employed it.

To follow the conceit still further. The Latin races dedicate the fifth day to Jove, and the Scandinavians to Thor, the thunderers and imperators of the two mythologies. Correlative with the Jeudi or Thursday of modern speech is the fifth degree of the musical scale, which theorists name the dominant, and justly, since it dominates over all the others, and strictly determines or commands the key.

Yet to proceed. Mars, or Tuisco, is the war-god of one or other of those antique creeds. Surely the glitter and the clang of arms, the pageant and the shouts of battle, may be compared with the keen brilliancy of the third of the key. Even when the piercing brightness of this exultant note is modified in the minor form of the musical scale, the pathos which some, the sternness which others, and the jollity which more ascribe to the minor third, are all associable with notions of soldiery and its consequences.

Another instance. Many writers ascribe a character of sadness to the sixth degree of the scale. This may be, because it bears a minor chord of which the key-note or tonic is the third, and because to them a minor chord sounds more plaintive than a major. This may be because the said minor chord often occurs in interruption of an expected full close, or termination of a rhythmical period, upon the chord of the tonic. This may be because there is still a lingering fondness for the exploded, confusing, and most mischievous term, "relative minor;" or because the key-note of a minor key, which—in consequence of our imperfect system of notation—has the same signature as a major key, is the sixth degree of the said major key. For one of these, or for any other reasons, the sixth degree is not rarely characterised as has been said; and its imputed sadness is, who shall question, typical of passion. Venus and Freya, after whom the sixth day is now variously named, were each the goddess of passion; and, further, Friday is an appointed fast of the Church, and a day of sad, nay, passionate association, throughout Christendom.

The first day was, of old, especially sacred to the sun, whose daily resurrection is the starting-point of our daily career. We celebrate on it the rising of our Lord, we weekly keep the Easter of the sun of Christianity, and we begin each scale of days anew, strengthened, let us hope, and refreshed by the rest and the rejoicing of this first of days. Pastime leads into it; coming time is counted from it; and thus, with backward and forward sight, we regard it as the end and the beginning of what has been and what will be. Such, too, in the week of sounds is the first note of the scale—the note which gives its name to the key, the tonic whence all the relations of the other notes are calculated. It would not be difficult fully to complete the parable and find some temporal correspondency with every note, not only of the diatonic scale, but also, as has been done in single instances, of the chromatic genus. Enough has been said, however, either to expose the futility of the fancy, or to prove that non-musicians may find a key to one of the technicalities of our art which is within the knowledge of everybody. There is now something to remark on the two notes, whose omission reduces the scale to its pentatonic form, so these analogical riddles must give place to more purely theoretical considerations.

The old recipe, familiar among musical amateurs, for making Scotch tunes, refers to the incomplete form of the so-called Scotch scale, and to the absence of the fourth and seventh degrees, which renders it incomplete. "Play on the black keys only of a pianoforte," it directs, "and Scotch tunes will be the music you produce." In other terms, the interval of the minor-third between the last of the group of three and the first of the group of two black keys, and between the last of the group of two, and the first of the three next following, occasions their grouping in this order of three and two, which order shows to the eye the two blanks, or holidays. There needs, however, something besides this limitation of notes to secure the composition of an acceptable melody, even a Scotch one; a technical knowledge or a natural perception of the principles of rhythm, namely, or a more or less imperfect memory of existing tunes. One of these, for example, was the something which enabled the Scotch amateur to fumble over the black keys till he found the succession of notes that constituted, (when Stephen Clarke, the English musician, had corrected their arrangement,) the melody of "Ye banks and braes;" either he had sufficient sense of measure (or Clarke had it for him) to guide him to the rhythmical division of the sounds, or else he recollected the air of "Lost, lost, lost is my quiet," but remembered not that he was recollecting.

It is remarkable, and of high importance in the consideration of the subject, that the fourth and seventh degrees are the two notes of the scale which especially characterise and define the key. Our three and two black keys—still to refer the matter to visible and tangible demonstration—may belong to the key of F sharp, or of B, or of C sharp, or to the enharmonic equivalents of these, G flat, or C flat, or D flat; and it is the restoration to the scale of a white key, at a semitone above the highest of the three and the two black keys, or at a semitone below the lowest, that determines to which of the three tonalities the five black keys belong. Be not confounded, O gentle reader, by the inevitable confusion of terms resulting from the twofold employ-

ment of this word "key," both to name the mechanical apparatus of ebony or ivory for communicating between the player and the strings of the pianoforte, and also to define the distribution of sounds in relation to the one chosen tonic, which is the first essential of music. It is unlucky, perhaps, that in this and several other cases, musicians employ one word to signify different and totally unconnected things, perhaps not; perhaps unlucky, because a nice attention is often needed to discriminate in which sense the word is employed; perhaps not, because a nice attention always helps to the understanding of a statement, and he who makes the statement may be thankful to anything therefore which compels the attention. I did not make the terms; however, since I must use them, let me trust to be as little bewildering as may be in their employment.

All who are experienced in modern music, are aware of the sensitive character of the seventh degree of the scale—the leading-note, as it is technically named, because in a full close it necessarily leads to the key-note. This stands at a semitone below the lowest of either the three or the two black keys, or else it is the highest of the three, and the key-note stands at a semitone above it. *La note sensible*, it is named by our neighbours; and the definition has been Anglicised with the explanation that the note is sensible because it always knows to which note it should proceed. What eagerness distinguishes and how necessarily the ear demands its ascent to it, the next note, is obvious to us all. It would be redundant to cite examples of the leading-note thus rising, since there is scarcely a phrase of modern music in which one occurs not, and the instances of its descent, when it is a note of the harmony, are so rare that each one is conspicuous, and if they are not offensive, it can but be upon the paradoxical principle that in some cases the ugly is the beautiful. Yet, strange to say, the sensitive character of this note, or man's susceptibility to its effect, is a development of only the last hundred years or so, prior to which, musicians, even the most gifted, disregarded its peculiarity, and as wontedly in their writings made it descend to the fifth as ascend to the root of the tonic chord. These were, however, educated musicians, who obeyed and looked not beyond those arbitrary scholastic rules which are so largely supplemented by modern exceptions as almost to be superseded. The natural musicianship of the unschooled people seems to have led them nearer to truth, or, at least, to truth as advanced acoustical science, and the knowledge of harmony thence derived, displayed to us; for, in many of our national tunes of earlier date, whose authorship is forgotten, or which have possibly been modified in their progress through tradition, there is such constant evidence of the requirement for the leading-note to rise, as prompts the inference that this requirement springs from a natural impulse, which, if for a while it was unrecognised in artificial rules, has now become one of the most authoritative of theoretical exaction. Is the omission of the leading note in the pentatonic scale to be ascribed to the indifference to its special character, or to the extremely keen perception of this among the peoples with whom that incomplete form of the scale prevailed and still prevails? It is a curious question.

An equally curious question refers to the omission of the fourth degree, according to alphabetical suc-

* This subdominant

is very co

cession, in the incomplete scale of five notes. A large portion of mankind forbore, nay, still forbears, to use the fourth degree from the key-note; whence may be inferred either their imperception of the beautiful and peculiar effect this gives to melody, or their repugnance. Some of our national melodies, on the other hand, are specially characterised by this very note; as, for example, the Somersetshire tune of "I live not where I love," each strain of which begins on the fourth of the key, and its final cadence,* derives singular sweetness and some pathos from the peculiar use of the fourth* of the scale.

Whereas, the seventh is the note which distinguishes any key from that of its subdominant (the key of C is distinguished from the key of F, for instance, by the B natural); the fourth is the note which distinguishes any key from that of its dominant (the same key of C is distinguished from the key of G by the F natural.) The fourth and seventh of the scale stand at the interval of an augmented fourth, or tritone, from each other. Contrapuntal rule forbids the melodic use of this interval, and the employment of its two notes under certain conditions in successive harmonies comes also under the old restrictions of the use of *Mi contra Fa*. This implies some affinity between the principles, or the intuitive feeling on which they were based, of our early musical theorists of the West, and those which directed the construction of the pentatonic scale and its acceptance by older nations.

Taken in combination, the interval of the augmented fourth, or its inversion the diminished fifth, is that which distinguishes the chord of the dominant seventh, and gives to it a character which has no likeness in that of any other harmony formed of diatonic notes. The intervals of the third and seventh in this dominant chord are represented by the leading-note and the subdominant. Exceptionally from the rule that of old governed the treatment of diatonic discords, this chord of the dominant seventh is sounded without the preparation of its dissonant note, and we are not merely unoffended, we are charmed by its musical effect. The reason is obvious; the notes at the intervals of a perfect fifth, major third, and minor seventh from the root (the last two standing at a diminished fifth from each other) are natural harmonies, which are produced in the air whenever the root or generator is sounded, and to play them in combination is but to make more articulate the notes which are already vibrating, or which are, in fact, prepared by nature. On the phenomena of the system of harmonies depends all that distinguishes modern free from ancient scholastic music. These phenomena were slowly discovered, and were more tardily and hesitatingly appropriated to art uses.

Were there no records of musical history, were we to speculate on the origin and development of musical art, it might be rational to suppose that this sprang from men's perception of the principles of nature. The records which we have, however, prove the contrary. Latest of all was discovered the harmonic derivation of this most natural dominant chord, and most recent is the theory thence evolved. Prior to

that, musicians perceived the beautiful effect of the combination, and employed it in daring defiance of prevailing prohibition. Earlier, a code of arbitrary rules was framed, upon purely artificial as opposed to natural principles, for the government of harmony in the form of counterpoint or descent, which rather controlled than guided the genius of a composer; and these rules forbade the employment of any discords, other than passing notes, without the mitigation of their harshness by the previous sounding or preparation of their dissonant note. Before this, the combination of musical sounds was unknown and unattempted, and melodic progression was the sole purpose to which they were applied, the only form in which their effect was experienced. Then, in their ignorance of natural principles, having no idea of how the dominant harmony commands the key, theorists, striving to find some satisfactory principle of tonality, devised what are called the Gregorian Modes. At a still remoter period, it would seem that men felt, but feared, the beautiful truths which latest science has fully revealed; it is difficult not to believe that they anticipated our principles of tonality when they ordained their distribution of sounds as major second, major third, perfect fifth, and major sixth from the key-note, and shrank from the employment of the fourth and seventh, but rendered these notes still "conspicuous by their absence." Such is the retrograde history of music, and it is curious to trace therein the re-awakening in the latest times of what must have been the impressions of the earliest, and the last development of principles which, though totally ignored in the interim, must have been apprehended by the very first musicians.

To dismiss, if not to exhaust, this branch of the subject—the scale, namely, under its several modifications, as the first element of our national music. Its pentatonic form points to an Oriental derivation of the people among whom this prevailed; but, while pointing in that direction, no more certifies such derivation of the Scots than of the Mexicans. It distinctly illustrates, however, a particular condition of musical sensitiveness common to peoples in widely remote parts of the earth, all of whom have been far advanced in some or other kind of civilisation. Frequent as is the use of this form of the scale in Ireland and North Britain, it rarely, if ever, appears in tunes belonging to Wales or England, except those which have been composed in imitation of the accredited Scotch idiom. The form of the scale which comprises the minor seventh degree from the key-note belongs to the Celtic bagpipes, and is also traced, with the instrument to which it is peculiar, to the East. Such tunes as "Nora Creina" exemplify its prevalence in Ireland; such as the "Reel of Tulloch" show its common use in Scotland; curiously enough, since bagpipes were also among the national instruments of that district, it appears little in the known music of Wales; but, in England, such tunes as "Stingo," or "Cold and raw," prove it to have held popular favour, and confirm the many Shaksperian allusions to the playing on bagpipes at this side of the Border. There are reasons for and against associating this bagpipe form of the scale with the Hypo-Dorian Mode of the ancient Greeks, and with the Æolian Mode of ecclesiastical use, of which, those against the association seemed to be the stronger. The character of the tunes just named, and their probable date, appear as arguments against the

* This form of close, with its characteristic prominence of the subdominant,



classical or Church source of the scale whereon they are constructed. There is ample evidence, nevertheless, of the influence of the Gregorian Modes upon the national music of all our four districts; "Near the Town of Taunton Dean" is, for instance, essentially in the Dorian Mode; and the close upon what sounds to the modern cultivated musician as the sixth degree of the key, which is frequent in early Irish and Scotch airs, and later imitations of the same, must have reference to the Æolian. Lastly, the use, common to all districts, of the complete major and minor scales which are based on the modern system of tonality, obviously proves the tunes wherein it occurs to be of date subsequent to the general establishment of this system, and to the wide practical acquaintance with instruments on which these scales can be played.

(To be continued.)

CRYSTAL PALACE.

THE series of winter concerts, which have produced so beneficial an effect upon musical art in England, began a new season on Saturday, the 1st ult. The prospectus announced the intention of the directors to commence the centenary of Beethoven's birth by a performance of the whole of his nine Symphonies, one being presented at each concert. This promise has been so far fulfilled in such a manner as the Crystal Palace orchestra only could do. The opportunities afforded to the executants of rehearsing together would alone effect much towards producing the fine ensemble nearly always observed here; but when the able and conscientious efforts of Mr. Manns are added, it becomes no longer a matter of surprise that these performances should have attained so wide a popularity, or have such influence in drawing together the crowds of amateurs who may be seen every Saturday, score in hand, following with intense interest the various intricacies of orchestration. Four of Beethoven's Symphonies have already been heard to perfection, and the Pianoforte Concerto in G received at the first concert so fine a rendering at the hands of Mr. Charles Hallé, as to elicit the warmest and most deserved applause.

At the same concert, a London audience was enabled to hear, for the first time, the "Overture di ballo," composed for the late Birmingham Festival by Mr. Arthur Sullivan. Having heard the work in Birmingham, we were prepared for the cordial reception it met with here. The applause bestowed upon a somewhat unequal performance of Professor Sterndale Bennett's charming overture, "Paradise and the Peri," proved that the honoured name of the Cambridge Professor might find a place in the Crystal Palace programmes a little oftener with advantage to both. At the third concert, Signor Bottesini astonished every one, as usual, by the dexterity with which he plays on that most unwieldy of instruments, the contra-basso.

On Saturday, the 22nd ult., Miss Agnes Zimmermann gained much applause by her intellectual and musicianly performance of Beethoven's Concerto in C minor.

If the vocal music has not obtained the same favour as the instrumental, it is in most instances due to the fact that greater attention is bestowed upon the preparation of the latter class. At the same time, it may be observed, that if a little more care and discrimination were used in the selection of the principal vocalists, the concerts would be infinitely more attractive to a mixed audience.

We understand that the whole of the first edition of Mr. Benedict's Oratorio, "St. Peter," having been sold, a second edition, both in folio and octavo, will be issued immediately. In this edition the author has effected several important alterations and improvements, and has marked the metronomic time throughout. The

work will be performed in London on the 13th of December; at Liverpool, by the Philharmonic Society, on the 20th of December; at Manchester and Bradford, under the direction of Mr. Charles Hallé; at Birmingham, under the direction of the Festival Choral Society, and in several other equally important towns of the United Kingdom.

Mr. C. J. BISHENDEN, the bass singer, gave a lecture on Wednesday, the 3rd ult., at Belmont House, Ealing, on "The Voice; or, the Art of Singing," introducing several popular songs, all of which were well sung, and received with much applause. Mlle. Verónica Nahigang was the accompanist, and Herr Weber played a selection in a very clever style on the pianoforte.

THE Victoria Park Choral Society gave its first concert on Wednesday, the 28th September, at South Hackney, under the conductorship of Mr. George Wells. Crampton's "Maud and I," Mendelssohn's "In a Wood," "Oh, Fly with Me," and "Over her Grave," were excellently sung. A chorus from Haite's "Abraham's Sacrifice," and some Psalmody specimens were also well given by the choir. The quartett, "When the Leaves," was effectively rendered by Misses Chambers and Edwards, Messrs. Le May and Rowe; and several solos and duets were received with much applause. The Rev. Dr. Stevens played a fantasia, and Mrs. Wells accompanied.

ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, having been recently beautifully decorated in accordance with the designs of the Architect, (George Truefit, Esq.), was re-opened for Divine Service, on Sunday, the 9th ult. The organ has lately been considerably improved and the swell enlarged, by Mr. Hedgeland, of Gower Street. The music was chiefly Gregorian, and the singing of the Choir was highly creditable to the Choirmaster, Mr. Redhead. Mr. John F. Lockwood (Organist of the Chapel) presided at the organ with his usual ability.

A CONCERT AND BALL, in aid of the funds of the sick and wounded in the French and German armies, took place on the 4th ult., at the Deutscher Club, Foley Street, Great Portland Street. The entertainment was given by the members of the Amateur Triad Musical Society, meeting in the above Hall, under the conductorship of Mr. R. Fletcher. The principal choral pieces were "All among the barley," "The March of the Men of Harlech" (harmonised by J. Barnby), the "May Fly" (Dr. Callcott), and the "Lurley," Volkslieder, from Novello's "Orpheus" book, all of which were sung with much effect, especially when it is considered that the choir has not been formed quite three months. Several vocal solos were also given by Miss Burrell, Mr. R. Fletcher, Mr. Sherrard, Mr. E. Lane, &c., and a quartett, the composition of the conductor, was deservedly well received. A pianoforte piece, called "The Camp," (played with spirit by Mr. R. Fletcher,) was much applauded.

MR. CHARLES E. STEPHENS has been elected an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music.

THE North London Philharmonic Society gave, by request, its second Concert this season at the Agricultural Hall, assisted by Madame Burrington and Mr. Lewis Thomas. The orchestral works were Weber's overtures, "Oberon" and "Der Freischütz," three movements of the "Reformation Symphony," and a selection from "Il Trovatore," all of which were most effectively performed. In the selection from "Il Trovatore," the solo parts played by Messrs. Archer, Crosby, Rattenbury, and Shield, were exceedingly well rendered, and thoroughly deserving of the applause with which they were received. A polka solo for piccolo, by Mr. H. Mickelburgh, a solo on the euphonium, and a set of Valses brought the programme to a close. The band was led by Herr Petersen, and conducted by Mr. Heath Mills, Music Tutor at the Wesleyan College.

At a recent meeting of the Stewards of the Hereford Musical Festival, Mr. J. H. Arkwright in the chair, the accounts were audited, and a loss of £95 was shown. It was resolved unanimously that a balance of £3 9s. out of £5 deposited by each steward should be returned by cheque, and that "The thanks of the stewards be given to the Lord Bishop, the Hon. and Very Rev. the Dean and the Chapter, for the effective aid and countenance afforded to the Festival, and for their hospitality." It was also further resolved unanimously, "That the thanks of the stewards be given to the Conductor and Hon. Sec. (Mr. Townshend Smith) for his indefatigable exertions in making the arrangements for the Festival, and for bringing it to a successful issue." Also it was further resolved, "That a standing committee be appointed to assist the Conductor in making future arrangements, consisting of Mr. J. H. Arkwright, the Hon. and Ven. the Archdeacon Lord Saye and Sele, the Hon. and Very Rev. the Dean, Rev. Prebendary Poole, Rev. B. L. S. Stanhope, Rev. G. H. Davenport, and Mr. F. L. Bodenham." A vote of thanks to the chairman brought the business to a close. Several gentlemen consented to have their names put down as stewards for the next Festival in Hereford in 1873. Many sums have lately been received on account of the charity fund, and we understand that the collection has now reached £1120, the second best ever known.

THE usual Monthly Term Meeting of the College of Musicians was held at Shaftesbury Hall, Aldersgate Street, on Thursday evening, the 6th ult., when Mr. George Wells gave an address upon "Teaching Singing in Class," in which he showed the importance of popular efforts in this direction, and concluded with a brief exposition of the method he recommended for adoption, illustrating his meaning by diagrams, &c. A conversation ensued. The College Choir afterwards sang some part music effectively. Mr. and Mrs. Collier, Messrs. Molson and Tustin, gave Horsley's "By Celia's arbour." Mrs. Mullen (piano), Mr. Mullen (violin), and Mr. Davis (flute), were the instrumentalists of the evening. The singing of the closing Anthem of the College concluded the proceedings.

It will be seen, upon reference to our advertising columns, that a new Hymnal of considerable importance is in preparation, and will be shortly published in all the most convenient forms and sizes, and at the lowest possible prices, by Messrs. Novello, Ewer and Co. As the number of Hymns will be unusually large, the Musical Editor wishes it to be understood that any good MODERN Hymn Tune, if sent to him, would receive a most careful examination, and, if approved of, would be inserted, his great desire being that the book should present a complete epitome of contemporaneous Hymn Music.

THE North London Festival Choir gave a Concert at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, on the 1st ult. The programme included Mendelssohn's "Lobgesang," and a miscellaneous selection. The principal vocalists were Miss Maria Langley, Miss Vincent, Mr. G. Platt, and Mr. Elton Glover. Organist, Mr. J. Robinson; Accompanist, Mr. Paulsen; Conductor, Mr. W. Robinson. The performance was highly appreciated by a large audience.

On Wednesday evening, the 12th ult., a Concert of Sacred and Secular Music was given by the choir of St. Dionis Backchurch, in the Langbourn Ward School, Lime Street, City, to a crowded and appreciative audience. The chair was taken by the Rev. W. H. Lyall, M.A., rector of St. Dionis Backchurch. The principal artists were Miss Avery, Miss Amelia Gray—who obtained much applause for her singing of Topliff's "Recitative and Air," "Ruth and Naomi"—and Miss Katie Smith, who was encored in a song, by S. W. New. Messrs. Bridge, Tear, and Richard, were also highly effective in

the music allotted to them. Miss Ellen Avery and Mr. S. G. Gray presided at the pianoforte, which was kindly lent by the Messrs. Collard and Collard. The choir performed some of the best anthems and part-songs in a manner which reflected much credit upon the Conductor and Choirmaster, Mr. John Gray. The proceeds were devoted to the National Society for aid to the Sick and Wounded in war.

AN Evening Concert, in support of the National Society for aid to the Sick and Wounded, was given at the Horns Assembly Rooms, Kennington, on Wednesday, the 19th ult., under the direction of Miss Helen Green. The artists were Mdle. Romanelli, Miss Edith Blair, Miss Emily Pittard, Mdle. Secretain, Mr. Croft, Herr Schuberth, and The London Orpheus Quartet. Notwithstanding the length of the programme, which included six instrumental compositions, it was listened to with great attention by a numerous audience. The young pianist, Mdle. Marie Secretain, gained a well-merited encore for her excellent playing, and several vocal pieces were also re-demanded. We understand that all the performers kindly gave their services for this worthy cause.

THE first concert for the present season of the Monthly Popular Concerts, organized by Mr. Ridley Prentice, was given at the Angell Town Institution, Brixton, on Tuesday evening, the 18th ult. Haydn's Quartett in G minor (No. 6) for two violins, viola, and violoncello; Lady Thompson's Trio in D minor for the pianoforte, violin, and violoncello; and B. Tours's "Mélodie Religieuse" for violin, violoncello, pianoforte, and organ, were the principal concerted instrumental pieces, all of which were given with excellent effect, the last-named composition being so well executed as to elicit an irresistible demand for its repetition. In these works Mr. Weist Hill played the first violin; Mr. Foulkes, second violin; Mr. Burnett, viola; Mr. Pettit, violoncello; Mr. Ridley Prentice, pianoforte; and Mr. Minson, organ. Mendelssohn's Sonata in E major (Op. 6) was selected by Mr. Prentice for his pianoforte solo; and we need scarcely say that it was performed throughout with the most artistic finish, and received with that applause alike demanded by the beauty of the composition and the perfection of its interpretation. The vocalists were Madame Dowland and Mr. Winn; and Mr. Minson conducted.

THE death of Michael Balfe, which took place on the 20th ult., at his country residence, in Hertfordshire, has removed from us one of the few modern composers who have obtained a fame by the production of operas in the English language. Whether his style was a purely national one may be open to question; but certain it is that, endowed with a natural gift for melody, and a keen perception of dramatic effect, he succeeded in establishing himself so firmly as the peoples' composer, that a new opera from his pen was always warmly welcomed, and his songs were for many years the stock favourites both in our drawing-rooms and concert-rooms. His first work, "The Siege of Rochelle," produced at Drury Lane Theatre, in 1835, at once lifted him into popularity; and "The Maid of Artois," in which Malibran played the principal part, created even a more marked success, an effect perhaps partly owing to its containing the well-known ballad, "The light of other days," which was sung by Henry Phillips. Amongst the operas produced after this time may be mentioned "Keolanthe," "The Bohemian Girl," "The Four Sons of Aymon," "The Daughter of St. Mark," "The Enchantress," "The Bondman," "The Maid of Honour," "The Rose of Castille," "Satanella," "The Puritan's Daughter," and many others, all of which were highly successful, but few of which are even now remembered. It should also be recorded that he produced an Italian Opera, called "Falstaff," at Her Majesty's Theatre; but only one or two pieces from this work are occasionally

heard in the concert-room, the Opera itself being forgotten. In the early part of Mr. Balfe's career he was known as a baritone singer, having performed on the operatic stage in Paris, and afterwards in England, in his own opera of "The Siege of Rochelle." The deceased composer was in his 63rd year.

WE read in the *Jewish Record*, that during the Great Festival cycle, the services were performed with an earnest spirit and much devotion, and the synagogue, capable of holding a thousand sittings, was filled on the New Year and on the Day of Atonement. The musical part of the service left nothing to be desired. Mr. Verrinder, the organist, had his instrument well in hand, and the choir was excellent, the principal female singers being Miss Grace Lindo and Miss Sydney. Mr. Van Noorden, and a new baritone, were also highly effective.

THE opening of the new organ at All Saints', Upper Norwood, took place on Friday evening, the 21st ult., when there was a full choral service. The church was crowded in every part, additional interest attaching to the service from the fact of it being known that Mr. Sims Reeves, sometime a resident in the neighbourhood, had most kindly promised to assist. The service commenced with a voluntary, and was followed by the recitative and air from the "Messiah," "Comfort ye" and "Every Valley," sung by Mr. Sims Reeves in his accustomed faultless manner. The responses were sung to Tallis, as arranged by Barnby; the Psalms, to a chant of Purcell's; and "Deus miseratur," to a chant of E. G. Monk's. The anthem, sung by Mr. Sims Reeves, was, "I will arise," from the "Prodigal Son," by Mr. A. Sullivan, which was accompanied by the composer, and so exquisitely given by Mr. Reeves, as to create a deep impression. At the close of the service Mr. Reeves again charmed every one by his delightful rendering of "Lord, in youth's eager years," from Horsley's "Gideon." The choral parts of the service were so steadily sung by a choir of fifty voices, as to reflect the greatest credit on Mr. E. A. Basley, the organist of the church, who had the arrangement of the service. The new organ, by Messrs. Hill and Son, is a fine instrument, of twenty-one draw stops, full compass swell and pedals, and deserves special commendation for its volume of tone and quality. A collection in aid of the organ fund was made, which, it is hoped, will cover the cost of the instrument.

A performance of Haydn's "Creation" was given by the Choir of the City of London College, on the 6th ult. The principal vocalists were Miss Robertson, Mr. Stedman, and Mr. Mills. This was the first time an Oratorio had been performed by the Choir, and the success of it reflected great credit upon the members and their Conductor, Mr. Constantine. The accompaniments were carefully played by Miss Hoare.

A CHORAL Festival took place on Tuesday the 25th ult., at St. Patrick's Church, Brighton, presenting some features of a novel and interesting kind. In the first place the musical arrangements had been placed solely in the hands of the Organist, Mr. E. H. Thorne. The choirs were supplemented by several voices belonging to one of the London Oratorio Societies; and amongst the pieces performed were four movements selected from the sixth of Handel's Chandos Anthems, "O praise the Lord with one consent." The church is remarkable as being the largest in Brighton, providing accommodation for sixteen hundred people on the floor of the building—and when it is added that the height is proportionate to its ground space, it will be perceived that the music had more than an ordinary chance of being heard to advantage. The morning service commenced with Bishop Jenner's popular "Quam dilecta" (sung in procession); the canticles consisted of Dr. Wesley's chant service in F—in selecting which, together with

Dr. R. P. Stewart's "Nicene Creed," we cannot help feeling a blunder was committed, these movements being full of recitation passages, which seldom go with anything like clearness on such occasions—the present performance being no exception to the rule. The anthem was an improvement upon the canticles and creed, being distinguished by a bold and massive swing that carried all before it. An interesting feature was the Tenor solo, "For this our truest interest is," sung by Mr. Raynham, who displayed a voice of singular vigour and beauty of tone, together with considerable breadth of phrasing. The singing of the old 100th by the choir and congregation in unison, with a varied organ accompaniment, was not the least effective item in the service. An appropriate sermon was preached by the Bishop of the diocese, the offertory being devoted to the relief of those suffering from the war. At the evening service the canticles were sung to a setting, by Mr. E. H. Thorne; the anthems being, "Stand up and bless the Lord," Goss; and the "Hallelujah Chorus," Handel. As a whole, the music went well, and in some instances the effects produced were exceedingly fine. The arrangements were unusually complete, and a luncheon at the Grand Hotel between the two services formed an interesting portion of the day's proceedings.

Reviews.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

St. Peter. An Oratorio. By Jules Benedict. (Concluded from p. 622).

AS the second part of the Oratorio has to deal with that touching page in the Apostle's story wherein is described so simply, yet so graphically, his frail denial of his Divine Master, we cannot but expect to find in it some of the most genuine outpourings of the musician's soul, and to Mr. Benedict's credit be it said that we are not disappointed. There is a most appropriate pomposity in the song, "Though all men shall be offended," (No. 24), highly suggestive of the too great self-reliance of the man who, thinking he stood, took no heed lest he might fall. The short chorus which follows, "They all forsook Him and fled," (No. 25), though commencing with a highly descriptive theme, is not altogether satisfactory, the sudden modulation into D[♯] major being palpably introduced more for the sake of leading into the next number than of illustrating the words any further. But the song which is thus heralded in, "O thou afflicted, and tossed with tempest," (No. 26), is a tissue of really beautiful melody from beginning to end, a song which deserves to live. The chorus, "We have a law," (No. 27), is solid, yet full of interest. The mode of entry of the subject in the bass, in bar 32, is very bold and original, though unfortunately weakened in effect, from the voice part only joining the instruments on the half bar to the undesirable abbreviation "we've a law." The simplest alteration of the words in the preceding bar would have enabled the bass voices to attack the subject in its proper form—a minim, followed by two crotchets. This number has an admirable, though strongly Mendelssohnian climax. On what principle the words of No. 29, "How art thou fallen, O Son of the morning," are applied to St. Peter, it is difficult to say. Lucifer was cast out for pride and fearless ambition; St. Peter fell from a weak fear of persecution; and, moreover, at the moment of denial, was certainly not in a frame of mind which would prompt him to say, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." As to the music of this number, it must be pronounced capital of its sort; but the first theme is so thoroughly in the style of a part-song, that the few intervals of the seventh, introduced to depict the words, "Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell," sound ineffective, because incongruous. Nos. 31, 32, and 33, representing the bystanders again accusing Peter of being a disciple, are admirably written, dramatic, and descriptive of the words. "The Lord is very pitiful," (No. 34), is a tenor song which will

The Lord be a lamp.

November 1, 1870.

"ST. PETER."

London: NOVELLO, EWER AND CO., 1, BERNERS STREET (W.), and 35, POULTRY (E.C.)

JULES BENEDET,.

Andante.

TREBLE.

ALTO.

TENOR.
(Sve. lower).

BASS.

ACCOMP.
♩ = 76.

p Andante.

(Subdued and with devotional feeling.)

e. dolce.
The

e. dolce.
The

e. dolce.
The

e. dolce.
The

e. dolce.
The

e. dolce.
The

dim.

(1)

Just published, SACRED SONGS FOR LITTLE SINGERS. Words by FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL. Music by ALBERTO RANDRIGER
Illustrated by the Brothers DALZIEL. Elegantly bound in cloth, gilt edges, price 6s. 6d. London: Novello, Ewer and Co.

Lord be a lamp . . . un - to . . . thy feet, . . . And a

Lord be a lamp un - to . . . thy feet, . . . And a

Lord be a lamp un - to . . . thy feet, . . . And a

Lord be a lamp un - to . . . thy feet, . . . And a

light, a . . . light . . . un - to . . . thy path; . . . The

light, a light un - to . . . thy path; . . . The

light, a light . . . un - to . . . thy path; . . . The

light, a light un - to . . . thy path; . . . The

Lord be a lamp . . . un - to . . . thy . . . feet, . . . And a

Lord be a lamp . . . un - to . . . thy . . . feet, . . . And a

Lord be a lamp . . . un - to . . . thy feet, . . . And a

Lord be a lamp . . . un - to . . . thy feet, . . . And a

(2)

REBEKAH A Sacred Idyll in two scenes. Written by ARTHUR MATTHISON. Vocal score, octavo, paper cover, 3s.; cloth, gilt edges, 5s. Folio edition, cloth, 10s. 6d. Chorus parts, octavo, 9d. each. The separate movements, folio, 2s. each. London: Novello, Ewer and Co.

light, a . . light, a light . . un-to thy path, The

light, a light, a light . . un-to thy path, The

light, a . . light, a light . . un-to thy path, The

light, a light, a light . . un-to thy path, The

Lord be a lamp, a . . lamp . . un-to thy feet; And a

Lord be a lamp, a lamp un-to thy feet; And a

Lord . . be a lamp, The Lord be a lamp, And a

Lord be a lamp, The Lord be a lamp, And a

light un-to thy path, and a light un-to thy path, and a

light, a light, and a light un-to thy path, and a

light, a . . light, and a light un-to thy path, and a

light, a light, and a light un-to thy path, and a

light, a light, and a light un-to thy path, and a

light, a light, and a light un-to thy path, and a

light un-to thy path, and a light un-to thy path. The

light un-to thy path, and a light un-to thy path. The

light un-to thy path, and a light un-to thy path, The

light un-to thy path, and a light un-to thy path. The

The piano accompaniment for the first system is written for a grand piano, featuring a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand.

Lord be a lamp un-to . . thy feet, * And a

Lord be a lamp un-to . . thy feet, * And a

Lord be a lamp un-to . . thy feet, * And a

Lord be a lamp un-to . . thy feet, And a

The piano accompaniment for the second system continues with the same rhythmic pattern, providing harmonic support for the vocal lines.

cres. light, a light un-to . . thy path, . . a . .

cres. light, a light un-to thy path, . . a

cres. light, a light un-to thy path, . . a . .

cres. light, a light un-to . . thy path, . . a

The piano accompaniment for the third system features a crescendo in the vocal lines, while the piano accompaniment remains steady.

light un - to thy path, un -

light un - to thy path, un -

light un - to thy path, un -

light un - to thy path,

dim. *p *rall.

to thy path. The Lord be a lamp un -

to thy path, The Lord be a lamp un -

to thy path, The Lord be a lamp un -

The Lord be a lamp un -

*p tempo.

to thy feet, And a light, and a light un -

to thy feet, And a light, and a light .

to thy feet, And a light, and a light .

to thy feet, And a light .

cres. cen

(5)

to thy path, . . and a light, and a
un-to thy path, . . and a light, and a
un-to thy path, . . and a light, and a
to thy path, . . and a

light . . un - to thy path, and a light, a
light . . un - to thy path, and a light, a
light . . un - to thy path, and a light, a
light un - to thy path, and a light, a

light un - to . . thy path, a light . . .
light un - to . . thy path, a light . . .
light un - to . . thy path, a light . . .
light un - to thy path, a light . . .

dim.

un - - to . . . thy path. The Lord pre -

dim.

un - - to . . . thy path.

dim.

un - - to . . . thy path,

dim.

un - - to . . . thy path. The Lord pre -

dim.

f *p*

- serve . . . thee, . . in all . . . the

The Lord pre - serve thee

The Lord pre - serve thee

- - serve, . . . pre - serve thee in all . . . the

pp

way thou go - - est, . . A - - men,

pp

in the way thou go - est, A - - men,

pp

in the way thou go - est, A - - men,

pp

way, the way thou go - est, A - - men,

pp

dolce.
A - men, The Lord . . . pre - serve . . .

dolce.
A - men, The Lord . . . pre - serve . . .

dolce.
A - men, The Lord . . . pre - serve . . .

dolce.
A - men, The Lord . . . pre - serve . . .

pp
thee, A - men.

pp
thee, A - men.

pp
thee, A - men.

pp
thee, A - men.

p

(8)

tax the powers of expression possessed by the performer, but which will undoubtedly repay a careful study. No. 37, the Apostle's profession of repentance, "O that my head were waters," is penitential, but perhaps might have been improved upon. The next number deserving special notice is No. 40, the lament of the Lord's mother, "I mourn as a dove," a soprano song, which has already gained a good report far and wide, and most deservedly. Graceful, expressive, and most pathetic phrases of melody are here supported by an accompaniment which is interesting, without being obtrusive; every sentence of the song is charming. The next number (41) begins with a Dead March. Why? The introduction of such a movement, as a preliminary to the Crucifixion, reminds us of the custom, not unknown in London, of playing the Dead March from "Saul" on Good Friday. If such an utterly ludicrous misappropriation of music could be seriously spoken of, it would have to be called blasphemous. The introduction of two themes simultaneously, previously given out separately, is not ingenious, but the music lacks dignity. No. 43a, "He will swallow up death in victory," is a spirited double-chorus, containing some most effective and pleasing antiphonal imitation to the words, "And sorrow and sighing shall flee away." At No. 44, we enter on the last scene of St. Peter's life included in the Oratorio, his imprisonment and miraculous release. The song of the delivering angel (No. 45), "Gird up thy loins, arise!" is one of those great songs which, while it fills us with admiration, makes us also regret that so few will be able to master its difficulties. The compass, E \flat to C in alt, or D \flat *ad lib.*, will limit its performance to a few of our best professional sopranos. It is a masterpiece of triumphant declamation. In the Chorus of Angels, (No. 46), the insertion of which seems quite unnecessary, a double forte on a down beat, to the word "The" Holy one, is not happy. St. Peter's thanksgiving, "The Lord hath sent His angel," (No. 48), is soon followed by the final chorus, "Sing unto God," from which we are glad to say an Amen-Fugue has not been excluded, inasmuch as no finer climax to an Oratorio has yet been discovered than a Fugue. Mr. Benedict handles his subjects with great contrapuntal skill, yet he has wisely not neglected those modern resources of harmony and modulation, which must inevitably be incorporated sooner or later into the Art or Counterpoint. The end crowns the work worthily.

From the frequent alternation of hearty praise and undisguised blame which runs throughout the foregoing remarks, the reader will probably anticipate our general statement, that the Oratorio of St. Peter is of very uneven merit; much appears in it which may well stand side by side with the greatest Oratorios of this century, yet the weak points are too evident. The recitatives throughout we cannot but call unworthy of so great a work. Perhaps they were hurried. Few authors sit down to write a recitative before they have sketched, either in mind or on paper, the more important numbers. The uniform want of strength and vigour would have led us to suspect the author to have been pressed for time, even if he had not told his own tale by giving us subdivided numbers. (No.—A. No.—B.). But, taken all in all, the work is fresh, displays great mastery in melody and counterpoint, and has not only already given to many high intellectual pleasure, but will continue to do so, and will stamp the author as one of the best musicians of his time. We could have wished it had been more advanced in style; but it must not be forgotten that Mr. Benedict has lived many years in England, and the bad influence of press criticism in keeping back advanced music, and of the highest social classes in fostering bad music, is too well known amongst students of music to be enlarged on here. It is, of course, not the duty of a musical reviewer to give an opinion on the merits of the libretto of St. Peter; we gladly abstain, therefore, from more than an allusion to the unfortunate alteration which has taken place between those whose talents and character make their remarks deserving of consideration. But, on the other hand, it would be a

great piece of injustice to Mr. Benedict, as a composer, if any weakness in the general effect due to the ill-constructed libretto, were to be laid to his charge. It has been often said, and must be well known, that the chief difficulty which beset the use of the life of St. Peter, as the subject of an Oratorio, was the necessary introduction of the Divine Master Himself, whose presence would naturally throw into the background the doings of a servant, even though that servant should be the great Apostle. We should have naturally expected therefore, that two points would have been kept carefully in view in the libretto; first, the importance of introducing as little of the life of our Lord as possible; secondly, the necessity of bringing prominently forward everything which could show forth the greatness of the hero. We are therefore surprised to find Nos. 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, occupied entirely with our Lord's Passion, of course banishing St. Peter from the hearers' minds for no inconsiderable time. But this is not all; the St. Peter of history is St. Peter of the pastoral staff and keys, the former commission being given to him in those touching words, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Feed my sheep," which, if clothed with the merest gauze of sweet sound, must melt all hearts; the latter authority granted by the memorable "Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church." The entire omission of these two passages is as astonishing as unfortunate. We can now say that almost every great composer has left a "Tu es Petrus," except the composer of St. Peter, an Oratorio. 1870. The fact that a large mass of our fellow Christians draw erroneous deductions from these important words, is no reason why we should ignore them. The words are "selected from Holy Scriptures," yet these texts from the authorised version have been overlooked. A hint as to the course the narrative should have taken may be gathered from the well known lines penned by that poet and divine, dear to us all, who, guided by angel-hand, has so lately been released from his earthly prison.

Touch'd, he upstarts—his chains unbind—
Through darksome vault, up masonry stair,
His dizzy, doubting footsteps wind
To freedom and cool moonlight air.

Then all himself, all joy and calm,
Though for awhile his hand forego,
Just as it touch'd the martyr's palm,
He turns him to his task below;

The pastoral staff, the keys of Heaven,
To wield awhile in grey-haired might,
Then from his cross to spring forgiven,
And follow Jesus out of sight.

Tarantella Brillante; for the Pianoforte. Composed by King Hall.

WE see no more reason why a piece should be called "brilliant" upon the title-page than that a song should be called pathetic or joyful. Surely the composition can be allowed to speak for itself; and we need scarcely say, that if its characteristic peculiarity cannot be discovered by those who listen, it can scarcely be worth much. In the present instance the "brilliance" of the *Tarantella* is hardly sufficiently prominent to justify its title; many similar pieces we could name, published without any such prefix, being infinitely more entitled to it. Apart from this question, however, we have nothing but good words to offer Mr. Hall, who comes before us as a composer for the first time. The subject of his dance is light, graceful, and melodious; and the passages are evidently written by a skilful master of his instrument. The themes in the subdominant and the relative minor are also tuneful, and flow with that ease which equally pleases performer and listener. We can conscientiously recommend this *Tarantella* to those who are searching for what we may call "finger-music."

A Shadow. What lack the Valleys and Mountains? Song. Words by Miss Adelaide Anne Procter. Composed by W. Howell Allchin.

THERE is much cleverness in this song, and a good feeling is evinced for the expression of the words; but

the vocal part is overweighted by the accompaniment, which runs mercilessly on almost without cessation throughout. We have used the conventional word "accompaniment" to denote the portion of the composition allotted to the pianist; but in truth we may say that it is a pianoforte piece with an accompaniment for the voice, for rarely indeed does the instrument assume a subordinate position. Even where this character is so well preserved as in this song, the effect is wearisome, the listener continually hoping that in the battle between the pianist and vocalist, one or the other will succumb, and afford him at least a few bars of repose. The composition is however evidently the work of a good musician, and our praise of both the vocal and pianoforte part proves how happy we could be with either. We particularly admire the phrase in $1\frac{1}{2}$ rhythm; and the final bars are thoroughly sympathetic with the poetry.

CRAMER AND Co. (LIMITED.)

Three Musical Sketches for the Pianoforte. Composed by C. W. Smith.

WITHOUT crediting Mr. Smith with the rare merit of having set any new pattern in pianoforte music, we may say that he has produced three extremely elegant pieces, on a model which is followed by the majority of the composers of the day. The "*Lieder ohne Worte*," sometimes brilliant and sometimes calmly expressive, issued by English music-publishers, under all sorts of fantastic titles, within the last few years, must, we should imagine, have so glutted the market that no new composition of this class would have a chance of a sale. Such, however, is clearly not the case, as our piles of music for review will amply attest; and here, as we have already said, are some very good specimens of these wordless songs, by a composer whose name is new to us. No. 1, in B minor, has a flowing melody, carefully accompanied, and by no means difficult to play. The change into B flat major, after the close in D, is effective; and the manner in which the return to the original key is managed, by enharmonically changing the G flat into F sharp, deserves commendation. The second piece we scarcely like so well. The melody is not so striking, and there is rather more rambling without design than is observable in No. 1. The modulations, too, are somewhat violent, although we must do Mr. Smith the justice to say that the parts are all most satisfactorily written. No. 3 is a melodious air in A flat major, the quiescent character of which is well contrasted by an energetic passage, accompanied with octaves for the left hand. The conclusion of this little piece is highly poetical, the subject dying off with much effect, accompanied with some harmonies which have not before appeared.

Cradle Song. Composed by E. Kelseig.

CRADLE-SONGS, boat-songs, and all other songs with a character which can be expressed upon the title-page, are extremely fascinating to inexperienced composers, for however poor the melody may be, the figure in the accompaniment is sure to tell; and thus mediocre compositions may very often be pushed forward, which, without such artificial aid, would scarcely perhaps be tolerated. The song before us is a proof of this; for the accompaniment, with its rocking effect, appears to have been primary in the mind of the composer, and the melody seems to have been written to it. In parts, too, the determination to preserve the character of the pianoforte accompaniment, given out in the opening bars, causes some rather harsh effects with the voice part; and we must also mention that the monotony caused by the want of any change of key becomes somewhat painful to the listener. The song, however, shows some musical feeling, and the composer may perhaps do better when not fettered by the necessity of rocking a child to sleep by waving *arpeggios*.

LAMBORN COCK AND Co.

Rondo, for the Pianoforte. By Westley Richards (Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.)

THE modest title "*Rondo, for the Pianoforte*," made us select this work from a pile of "*Salon*" music, in the hope of seeing some faint indication of a return to health and strength, after the many years in which the art of pianoforte composition in this country has feebly dragged on an existence of comparative uselessness. Mr. Richards's *Rondo* does not altogether please us in its construction; but his good intentions should ensure him a warm welcome. We do not like the *arpeggios* at the commencement of his piece; and there is a somewhat incongruous mixture of old and new forms in the passages; but it contains good solid workmanship throughout, and his subjects are bold, melodious, and remarkably well harmonised. We hope shortly to meet with so conscientious a composer again.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

•• Notices of concerts, and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance.

We beg to remind our correspondents that all notices of country concerts, whether written or extracted from newspapers, must be accompanied by the name and address of the person who sends them.

Our correspondents will greatly oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes that may occur.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

Notice is sent to all Subscribers whose payment (in advance) is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscription is not renewed. We again remind those who are disappointed in obtaining back numbers that, although the music pages are always stereotyped, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

AMATEUR.—The question should be put to a professor of singing.

EDMD. E. D'ENYER.—Enquire of the publishers, Rudall, Rose, Carter and Co., 20, Charing Cross.

Brief Summary of Country News.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this Summary; as all the notices are either collated from the local papers, or supplied to us by occasional correspondents.

ACTON TRESSSELL, STAFFORD.—On Tuesday, the 27th September, the ancient Parish Church (which during the past nine months has undergone a complete restoration) was re-opened for divine worship. The sermon in the morning was preached by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield, and in the afternoon by the Rev. Dr. Fraser, Vicar of Alton. In the afternoon a full choral service was performed by the Choir, assisted by the Choirs of Rednal, Christ Church, Stafford, and Walton. The prayers were intoned by the Rev. C. H. Fuller, of Walton, and the musical portion of the services was directed by Mr. W. A. Marson, Organist of Christ Church, Stafford, who presided at the Harmonium, which he kindly lent to the church for the occasion. The opening services were continued on Sunday, the 2nd ult., when the preachers were the Vicar, the Rev. J. R. Alsop, and the Rev. E. J. Wrottesley, of Brewood. There was a large congregation on each occasion, and the collections amounted to upwards of £50.

ALNWICK.—In honour of the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein to Alnwick Castle, his Grace the Duke of Northumberland gave a grand concert in the Guest Hall of the Castle. The artists engaged for the occasion were of high standing in the musical world, and included the excellent choir of Mr. Rea, who, together with Mr. Hare, of Newcastle, superintended the arrangements in connexion with the concert; and the manner in which everything passed off reflected the highest credit on both these gentlemen. Mr. T. A. Alderson was the accompanist to the choir.

ASTON, NEWPORT, SALOP.—On Wednesday, the 5th ult., a Concert was given in the National School-room by the choir, assisted by several ladies. The principal vocalists were Mrs. Liddle, Miss Avena Blackburne, the Misses Bailey, and Mr. Palmer. The concert was so successful that it was repeated on the following night, when almost every composition was encored. In addition to the vocal pieces, a duet was very well played by Miss Bedwell and Miss Avena Blackburne, and Mrs. Ashdown also gave a pianoforte

solo with much effect. Mrs. Corbett, of the Hall, kindly lent the piano. Mr. Palmer conducted with his usual ability. The proceeds were devoted to the fund for the relief of the widows and orphans of sailors lost in H.M.S. "Captain."

BARNSELEY.—On Tuesday evening, the 4th ult., the first of a series of entertainments, under the auspices of St. John's Glee and Madrigal Society, was given in the school-room adjoining the church, to a numerous and respectable audience. The Rev. W. J. Binder, the Vicar, occupied the chair. The choir, numbering 22 voices, was ably conducted by Mr. Eyres, and Mr. F. Bedford efficiently presided at the pianoforte. The whole of the concerted pieces were given with precision and care. Mr. T. Goodyear, Mr. W. Atkinson, and Mr. J. Atkinson were the soloists, and acquitted themselves admirably, the two former receiving well-merited encores. At the conclusion of the concert, votes of thanks were given to the singers and to Mr. Whitehead. The entertainments are to be continued fortnightly.

BASINGSTOKE.—The Concert in support of the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in the War, given by the Malshanger Amateur Musical Society, took place on the 4th ult., at the Town Hall. The first part of the programme was devoted to Professor Sterndale Bennett's "May Queen," Miss Fanny Chatfield was the May Queen, Miss Marian Apietro the Queen, the Rev. C. E. Hey the lover, and Mr. Barnby Robin Hood. Miss Fanny Chatfield was warmly and deservedly applauded in "With the carol in the tree;" and the beautiful trio, "The Hawthorn in the glade," given by Miss Fanny Chatfield, the Rev. C. E. Hey, and Mr. Barnby, created a marked effect. All the principal vocalists were thoroughly efficient; and Miss Marian Apietro deserves a word of commendation for the able manner in which she sang the music of the Queen at a very short notice. The second part was miscellaneous; and amongst the most effective vocal solos may be mentioned Miss Harriett Young's "Non più mesta," Miss Marian Apietro's "Where'er you walk" (from "Sembré"), Miss Fanny Chatfield's "Marinella," so well given as to be enthusiastically encored, and Mr. Barnby's "I'm a roamer," which was likewise redemanded. Rossini's "La Carità" (the solo by Miss Fanny Chatfield) was also highly effective; and a pianoforte piece by Mr. Blackith and duet by Miss E. Portal and Miss Gilbert were also included in the selection. The singing of the choruses was so steady as to reflect the utmost credit upon the training of Mr. Hanson Blackith, who presided with much skill at the pianoforte.

BELFAST.—On the 10th ult. the Sixth Concert of the Ulster Hall Monday Popular Concerts took place, the vocalists being Miss Grace Armistage and Mr. H. C. Sanders, both of whom are well known to the frequenters of these entertainments. Miss Armistage was deservedly encored in "The Echo Song," to which Miss Bertha Brousil played a beautiful violin obbligato, and Mr. Sanders had a similar compliment paid to him in "The Irish Emigrant." Miss Bertha Brousil and Mr. T. Dodds were highly effective in Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata, for violin and pianoforte, to which both executants did the fullest justice, and in a duo concertante, for violin and pianoforte on airs from Donizetti's opera "La Favorita" (De Beriot and Osborne), they were also warmly applauded. Mr. Tom Dodds performed on the grand organ the overture to "Tancréd," Mendelssohn's Organ Sonata No. 3; an air with variations of Pleyel, and the Coronation March from "Le Prophète" (Meyerbeer), in all of which he was thoroughly successful, the air with variations being redemanded. The pianoforte accompaniments to most of the vocal pieces were efficiently played by Mr. Sanders.

BOLTON.—Mr. W. T. Best recently gave an Organ Recital on the instrument standing in the Congregational Church, St. George's Road. The edifice was densely crowded on the occasion; and during the evening, several pieces of sacred music were sung with good effect by the Choir attached to the Church.

BRADFORD.—On Thursday evening, the 6th ult., the first concert for the season of the Bradford Choral Society was given in St. George's Hall, before a large audience. The principal vocalists were Miss Amy Empsall, Miss Myers, Mrs. Lincey-Nulton, Messrs. R. Leach, Thornton Wood, and C. Prince, supported by the other practical members of the Society, numbering nearly 200 voices. Mr. A. Moorhouse was the organist and accompanist, and Mr. Broughton, of Leeds, besides conducting, played Handel's "Occasional Overture" on the organ, and accompanied some of the pieces. The programme was composed of sacred and secular music, several compositions being given for the first time. Amongst the most noticeable were Spohr's "How lovely are thy dwellings fair," and Hummel's "Alma Virgo." Several vocal solos were effectively given and much applauded. The concert throughout was of a pleasing character, and both Mr. Broughton and Mr. A. Moorhouse contributed in a great measure to the satisfactory result.

BRISTOL.—The opening of the grand Organ, built by Mr. Willis, of London, took place at the Colston Hall, on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 4th and 5th ult. Performances on the new instrument were given on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings by Mr. W. T. Best, when an excellent programme of classical music was provided. On Tuesday evening the "Messiah" was performed, with organ accompaniment by Mr. Best; and on Wednesday evening a miscellaneous concert was given. The principal vocalists were Miss Edith Wynne, Miss Julia Elton, Mr. Vernon Rigby and Mr. Lewis Thomas: pianoforte, G. R. Rieley; violin, Mr. W. Hill; conductor, Mr. George Rieley.

BURSLEM.—The Staffordshire Potteries Tonic Sol-fa Choristers gave their first concert of the season in the Town Hall, on the 18th ult., the profits of which were devoted to the Sick and Wounded Fund. There was a full attendance. Madame Thaddeus Wells was solo vocalist, Mr. W. Shakspear, pianist; and the Anemole Union, under the direction of Mr. Lazarus, also assisted with marked success. The choristers, conducted by Mr. Powell, sang with much energy and precision the "Marsellaise" and the "Watch by the Rhine," the repetition of the latter being unanimously demanded. A new part-song by Henry Lahee, "Hurrah for the Queen of England," closed the concert, and was received with the utmost favour. The choir is preparing *Eljah* for the Christmas Oratorio.

BUSHEY, HERTS.—The Oxley Choir gave its third Concert at the Sale Room, Pinner Road, on Tuesday the 18th ult. The programme consisted of a selection of sacred and secular music, which was fairly rendered and appeared to be very much appreciated. The principal vocalists were Mrs. Samuel Gee, Miss Jane Hathway, Mr. H. Gregory, Mr. C. P. Hooker, Mr. W. Cooper, Master A. Waud, and Master Robert Bassill. The sacred music was accompanied by the choir-master Mr. Harry Hathway, on the harmonium; and the secular part by Miss Hathway, on the pianoforte, which was kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. C. Swanton, of Bushey.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.—The members of the Port Elizabeth Choral Society gave a public rehearsal in the Grey Institute on Friday the 2nd Sept., before a large and fashionable assemblage. The admission was by private ticket only, and everything passed off most successfully. The songs "Oh, I love the morning," "Take this cup of sparkling wine," and "The Breast-knots," by lady vocalists, and the chorus "The Lark," were warmly encored. Mr. E. Newbatt acted as conductor at the pianoforte with his usual ability.

CAPE TOWN, CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.—The Intermediate Tonic Sol-fa Class, in connexion with the Young Men's Christian Association, under the direction of Mr. J. H. Ashley, gave a concert of vocal music in the Mutual Hall, on the 15th August. The last part of the programme consisted of what is generally known as Locke's music to "Macbeth," with new words adapted by Mr. James S. Stallybrass, entitled "A Summer Day." The attendance was very good, and the performance was highly satisfactory.

CHELTEMHAM.—The Amateur Concert in aid of the fund for the relief of the Sick and Wounded in War, on Tuesday evening, the 11th ult., was a complete success, as well financially as musically, the Assembly Room being crowded in every part. The principal vocalists were Mrs. Day, Miss English, Miss Brind, Miss Hawkey, Miss Smith, Mrs. Rorodalle, the Revs. J. Graves and W. D. Dancombe, Messrs. Trevor Roper, Phillips and Peppin, all of whom were highly successful, Mr. Trevor Roper and Mr. Phillips especially receiving the warmest applause; and Miss Smith, the daughter of the conductor, winning universal admiration for her singing, particularly in a duet with Mr. Phillips, which was redemanded. A violin solo by Mr. Rougemont, was a decided feature in the programme, and elicited well-deserved applause. The whole of the performances were accompanied by Mr. J. O. Smith, with whom the concert originated, and to whose exertions, aided by the ladies and gentlemen who performed, the Sick and Wounded Fund is indebted for the sum realized, which we understand amounted to £65 3s.

COBHAM.—The Harvest Festival was celebrated on the 21st September, in St. Andrew's Church, which was tastefully decorated with flowers, wheat and fruit, for the occasion. Services—Mattins, Litany, and Choral Celebration of the Holy Communion, to Dr. Hayne's music; Choral Evensong and Sermon. The first part of the service (Tallis) was intoned by the Vicar, the Rev. Gerard Banks, and the second part by the Rev. Percival Webb. The Processional Hymn was 360 (*Ancient and Modern*). Hymns Nos. 350, 224 and 320 were sung. The Evening Canticles, Parisian Tones, arranged by Dr. Stainer. Proper Psalms, 145, 147, 150, were given from Redhead. Mr. H. P. G. Brooke, the Organist and Director of the Choir, played an excellent selection of voluntaries. The Lord Bishop of Winchester preached the sermon. The thank offerings for the sick and wounded in the present war, realized over £60. The Lord Bishop, after service, in the vestry, complimented the Organist, by saying it was the best country choir he had ever heard. The services at St. Andrew's are Choral and Gregorian.

COLNBROOK, NEAR WINDSOR.—Harvest Thanksgiving Services were recently held in St. Thomas's Church. The Holy Communion was administered at 8 o'clock a.m., Morning Prayer at 9, Evening Service at 5.30 p.m. The choir and clergymen entered the church, which was beautifully decorated with corn, fruit, flowers and evergreens, singing the well-known hymn, "Come, ye thankful people, come." The Prayers were intoned by the Rev. W. Greive, M.A., and the Rev. R. Wilkinson read the Lessons. The service was full choral. The Anthem, "Thou visitest the earth," was sung by the choir, Mr. R. Ratcliff taking the solo. The Rev. H. Blodden, M.A., of Twickenham, preached the sermon. During the singing of the *Te Deum* a collection was made on behalf of the sick and wounded engaged in the war. At seven o'clock two hundred persons sat down to tea in the Public Room, after which a concert took place.

DUNDEE.—On Saturday afternoon, the 24th September, a large party of ladies and gentlemen interested in musical matters

met by invitation in Messrs. Methven, Simpson and Co.'s Music Saloon, to hear some practical illustrations by Mr. Hirst, Organist of the Parish Church, of the capabilities of Messrs. Mason and Hamlin's new invention known as the American Organ. The tone produced from this instrument is, for purity and smoothness, most remarkable; and for all places and purposes in which the harmonium is found to be of tolerable use, there can be no question that the American Organ is infinitely to be preferred. The pieces were well selected to display the capabilities of the organ; and Mr. Hirst's playing was in the highest degree satisfactory.

ECCELES, MANCHESTER.—The Eighth Annual Festival of Choirs in Union was held under very favourable auspices at the Parish Church on Saturday, the 1st ult. The choral portions of the Service (under the able management of Mr. John Meadowcroft) were most effectively given—the anthem, "O praise the Lord" (Goss), being particularly well rendered. Mr. Bridge, of the Cathedral, presided at the organ, and Bishop Fraser preached an eloquent sermon, the tenor of which was unbounded praise of good church music. The collection realized £32 15s.

HEREFORD.—The Michaelmas Special Meeting of the Hereford Choral Society was held during the past month at the College Hall. There was a fair attendance. The principal feature of the programme was Haydn's Symphony in D, which was played throughout with great care and effect, and deservedly applauded. The concertina solo by Mr. Bezant was another effective performance; and a corneopane solo was also warmly applauded. In the vocal music, the Rev. A. Robinson's singing of "Non è ver" and of "All that is lovely" was charming. The Rev. G. Everett, too, made a highly favourable impression by his rendering of "Tilted," Miss Broad sang "O fair dove" with her usual neatness and purity of style; and the ballad, "The first flower" was given with effect by Master Phillips, who promises to become an excellent singer. The choral music was well selected. Mr. Townshend Smith conducted with care and judgment.

HUDDERSFIELD.—The usual Harvest Thanksgiving Service and Dedication Festival was held in St. John's Church, on Wednesday, the 5th ult. Much interest was excited by the reunion of several choirs from the district. On the present occasion the choristers from St. Thomas's, Christ Church, Moldgreen, and St. Stephen's, Rashcliffe, assisted; and the musical part of the service was effectively rendered. The singing of the anthem, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion" (the composition of Mr. Taylor, honorary organist of Almondbury Parish Church), reflected the greatest credit on the combined choirs. The sermon was preached by the Rev. S. Flood, M.A., Vicar of St. Matthew's, Leeds, from 1st Cor. c. xv., v. 10. At the conclusion of the service the clergy, choirs, and other friends, met in Hillhouse School-room, where a substantial supper was provided. A CONCERT took place on Friday, the 9th ult., the list of artists engaged including the names of Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Madame Patey-Waycock, Mr. Patey, Mr. Nelson Varley, M. Lemmens, and Mr. King Hall. The first part of the programme consisted of Mendelssohn's Operetta, "Son and Stranger"; and although Madame Sherrington had to be replaced by her sister, Miss Josephine Sherrington, on account of illness, the performance was highly successful. Mr. Patey was deservedly encoined in the fine song, "I'm a roamer bold and gay," and Mr. Varley did full justice to the melodious "When the evening bells are chiming." The ballad sung by Miss Sherrington, "The flowers are ringing their bells of gold," was also evidently enjoyed by the audience. In the second part of the concert, M. Lemmens displayed the power of his instrument—the mustel organ—and his command over it, to perfection. Madame Patey created a marked impression by her exquisite rendering of Sullivan's song, "Looking back," and Messrs. Patey and Varley also received much applause for their solos. The vocal music was effectively accompanied by Mr. King Hall.

LEEDS.—The compositions of Mr. Henry Smart were thoroughly enjoyed at a Concert on the 1st ult., at the Town Hall, the majority of the pieces receiving unanimous encores. Amongst the most successful songs were "The birds are telling one another," well sung by Miss Winder; "The Switzer Maiden," excellently rendered by Miss Hiles; and a MS. song, "Hurrah! for merry England," capably given by Mr. Dodds, in which Mr. Smart has shown that vigorous, stirring music and a most pleasing melody may be combined. Organ solos were played by Dr. Spark, all of which were much applauded. The Andante Grazioso in G was especially noted for its lovely flowing subject and elegant treatment.

LIVERPOOL.—The seventh Concert of the Philharmonic Society, for the present year, took place on the 4th ult., the first part being devoted to a performance of Mendelssohn's "Athalie," solo artists Madame Vanzini, Miss Margaret Galloway, and Mdlle. Drasill. The second part was miscellaneous, commencing with Sullivan's new "Overture di Ballo," which was played with much effect. The remaining portion of the music consisted of songs and duets by the above-mentioned ladies, and Mr. Maybrick, and a melodious four-part song by A. S. Sullivan, "Parting gleams," sung by the choral members. The concluding piece was Meyerbeer's "Marche aux Flambeaux."

MAIDSTONE.—Mr. George Tolhurst's Oratorio, "Ruth," was again performed on Thursday, the 20th ult. The band and chorus numbered one hundred and fifty performers, the composer himself conducting. There was a numerous attendance, although the weather was unpropitious; and the work was extremely well received. The principal vocalists were Miss Susannah

Cole, Miss Wallis, Madame Sauerbrey, Mr. John Woollett, and Mr. R. Farquharson. The proceeds of the Concert were devoted to the fund of the National Society, for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded in War.

MANCHESTER.—St. Augustine's Catholic Church (one of the oldest in Manchester), has always been noted for the excellence of the Choir and the high standard of music performed. The works given on the occasion of the Jubilee, which took place on the 25th September, were—Haydn's "Imperial Mass," Hummel's "Alma Virgo," Zingarelli's "Laudate," Emerigier's "Magnificat," Gounod's "O Salutaris" (tenor solo and chorus), Lutz's "Tantum Ergo," and Gregorian "Te Deum;" the whole with full band accompaniment, except the "Te Deum."—MR. SALTS (of the Manchester Vocal Society, and principal bass of St. Augustine's) gave a Concert on the 1st ult. at the Hyde Road Hotel, which was well attended. The programme was popular and varied, and appeared to give the utmost satisfaction to the audience, several pieces being enthusiastically encoined.—We understand that the members of Mr. Charles Hallé's Choir are now rehearsing Beethoven's Mass in D, which is to be given this season for the first time in Manchester.—THE members of the Cathedral Sunday Evening Voluntary Choir have recently presented their Choirmaster, Mr. John Meadowcroft, with a handsome album filled with their portraits, and a copy of Benedict's "S. Peter," as a mark of the esteem in which he was held during his eleven years of office. Mr. Meadowcroft is succeeded by Mr. Bridge, Organist of the Cathedral.

MERTHYR.—On Friday, the 7th ult., a Concert took place at the Drill Hall, at which Miss Edith Wynne, Mr. Lewis Thomas, Mr. John Williams, Mr. E. Lawrence, and Mr. Frost were the principal artists. The concert commenced with a duet for harp and piano, executed by Mr. Frost and Mr. Lawrence with much taste. Mr. John Williams in "Then shall the righteous," Miss Wynne in "From mighty kings," and Mr. Thomas in the "Village Blacksmith," and Mendelssohn's "I'm a Roamer," were highly effective. The accompaniments were ably played by Mr. Lawrence.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.—The fifth series of the excellent Concerts, organised by Mr. Res, has commenced in the Town Hall, under most favourable circumstances. On the first evening the programme was similar in design to those of former years, namely, an overture at beginning and end, a grand symphony at the conclusion of the first part, the second part beginning with an operatic selection, and smaller orchestral works, and solos, vocal and instrumental, filling up the body of the programme. No more need be said of the orchestra than that it showed itself as capable of dealing with the refined and classical Symphony of Beethoven (No. 2) as with a popular Overture of Auber. The instrumental soloists were Mr. Howard Reynolds (cornet) and Mr. Lockwood (harp), both of whom were highly successful. Miss Blanche Cole made her re-appearance, and sang a Cavatina of Rossini's with much effect. She also gave a ballad, "Down in a valley" (Albion). Mr. Cotte made his *debut*, and sang "Let me like a Soldier fall," and "Elly Mavrouneen." Judging from the first performance, these concerts are likely to be extremely attractive.

PENRITH.—On the 6th ult. the "Penrith Association for the Improvement of Church Music" assembled at St. Andrew's Church, and considering that the Society only commenced work in July last, the promoters of it have every reason to be satisfied with the result of its first Festival. Up to one o'clock, the time fixed for rehearsal, the singers were arriving from all parts of the country. The rehearsal and arrangements for sitting extended from 1 p.m. to 2.30, from which time there was an interval until 3. By this hour all were in their places, the unsupplied singers occupying the north and south sides of the central aisle, the trebles being in front, with the tenors and basses behind them in the order indicated. Precisely at three the surpliced choirs (*viz.*, St. Andrew's, Brougham, and Crosby Ravensworth), numbering forty members, and about twenty clergy, formed in procession, and the first verse of "Onward Christian soldiers," was sung by them before entering the nave. The unsupplied choirs, numbering about 200, joined in the second verse as the procession moved slowly up the centre aisle. The tune was the well-known and popular adaptation by Dr. Dykes of the Andante from Haydn's Overture in D. The Magnificat was sung to the York Processional Chant, and the Nunc dimittis to Barnby in E. Both chants were tuneful and congregational; and in the latter especially the tenors and basses sang with much effect. The hymn before the sermon was Dean Alford's "Come, ye thankful people, come," and was given with much precision to Dr. Elvey's tune. The Prayers from this point were conducted by the Rev. G. H. Lightfoot, curate of Crosby Ravensworth. The service up to the third Collect was effectively sung by the Vicar. The Confession and Lord's Prayer were recited in monotone, with good articulation. The responses (plain song) up to the Gloria, were in unison. The remainder of the responses and the service were sung in harmony. The Psalms for the Day, 32nd, 33rd, and 34th, were taken to Aldrich in A, Buttsbill in A, and the 34th to Fishermen in A. The chanting on the whole was deliberate, united, and well sustained in pitch. Dix's hymn, "As with gladness, men of old," to W. H. Monk's setting, prefaced the sermon. Much of the steadiness of the choir was attributable to the excellent conducting of Mr. Reeley, of Crosby Ravensworth. Mr. Bateman presided at the organ.

PRESTON.—A new organ by Forster and Andrews, for the Lancaster Road Congregational Church, was opened on the 26th Sept. Mr. Best presiding in the afternoon and evening. The organ performances in the evening were varied by a selection of

sacred music by the choir, from the works of Haydn, Mozart and Mendelssohn.

SCARBOROUGH.—This fashionable summer resort is now well provided with new organs, the largest being the fine instrument by Hill, in the Parish Church. During the last season, Messrs. Forster and Andrews, of Hull, have erected in the Bar Church, a new instrument of three manuals and pedal, the excellent qualities of which have been ably displayed by Mr. W. T. Best, at two Recitals, before a numerous audience. At the invitation of Mr. Naylor, Mr. Best also played at the Parish Church on the organ lately erected by Messrs. Hill and Son.

SHIRLEY, NEAR SOUTHAMPTON.—On Tuesday, the 11th ult., a Concert was given at the Assembly Rooms by the members of the Shirley Glee Union, in aid of the Fund for the benefit of the sufferers by the loss of H.M.S. "Captain." The principal vocalists were Mrs. F. Weeks, Miss C. Pike, Messrs. F. Weeks, C. Royale, A. Dean, W. Young, and S. Chalk, and Miss Keley and Mr. J. Lamb assisted in the glees. Mr. H. Rowed (Organist of Millbrook Church), Mr. W. Pearce (violin), and Mr. S. Matthews (piano), kindly lent their aid in the instrumental part of the programme. The whole of the musical arrangements were under the direction of Miss Lillie Young (pianist), who conducted with much efficiency.

STAINLAND.—On Saturday evening, the 8th ult., the Singing Class, in connexion with the Congregational Chapel, gave its first Annual Entertainment, before a large audience. The programme included sacred and secular music, amongst the former of which may be mentioned a song called "The Penitent's Return," the composition of Mr. B. Akroyd (the teacher of the class), and sung by him for the first time; and a chorus, "Give her of the fruit of her hands," dedicated to the female portion of the class, also a new composition. Several solos were given by Mrs. Akroyd, Mr. J. Beaumont and Mr. E. Tweed; and the concert was in every respect highly successful.

STALYBRIDGE.—The Twenty-Sixth Annual Festival of the Stalybridge Harmonic Society was celebrated on the 6th ult. by a very efficient performance of Handel's Oratorio "Judas Macchabeus" at the Mechanics' Institution. The principal vocalists were Miss A. Clelland, Miss Heywood, Mr. A. Moulding, and Mr. Thomas Dodd. The band and chorus numbered upwards of a hundred, with Mr. James Swallow as leader, Mr. Irvine Dearnaley at the harmonium, Mr. Robert Hall, chorus-master, and Mr. S. Garlick, conductor. Miss Clelland was highly successful in "O Liberty," "Wise men, flatterer," and "Pious orgies," the violinello obligato to the last song being well played by Mr. Swift. Miss Heywood, too, was deservedly applauded in the contralto music, and Mr. Moulding in "Sound an alarm," and Mr. Dodd in "Arm, arm, ye brave," created a genuine effect. The choruses were excellently given throughout, especially "We come," "Fall'n is the foe," "Hear us, O Lord," and "We hear," and Mr. Garlick conducted the work with much decision and intelligence. The room was well filled with a most appreciative audience.

WREXHAM.—The first of a series of Concerts, which Mr. Harris, the talented Organist at St. Mark's Church, has arranged for the season, took place in the Wynnstay Arms Assembly Room, on the 26th September. The principal vocalists were Miss Maggie Jones; Mr. Austin (in place of Mr. D. Trevor Roper, who was prevented by indisposition from attending), and Mr. H. J. Nicholls. The orchestra, which was composed of gentlemen connected with the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, with the exception of Mr. C. A. Stephenson, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Jennings, and some picked members of the Militia Band, was thoroughly efficient. The concert was exceedingly well attended, and proved a decided success.—At a committee meeting, held on the 5th ult., Mr. Edwin Harris, Organist and Choirmaster of St. Mark's, was unanimously elected to the important post of Choirmaster to the Wrexham Deanery Choral Union. The respective Choirs of the Wrexham Parish Church, St. Mark's, Wrexham, Marchweil, Bangor, Isycoed, Hope, Brymbo, Ruabon, Trevor, Llangollen, and others, will be entrusted to Mr. Harris's training, and from the success which has hitherto attended this gentleman's efforts, there can be no doubt that a vast improvement will soon be visible in the town and neighbouring choirs.

YEovil.—Mr. Loaring's Concert in Aid of the Fund for the Sick and Wounded in the War, on the 20th ult., was a decided success. The programme comprised an excellent selection of vocal and instrumental music. There was a large attendance, and the sum of £5 was realized.

CHOIR APPOINTMENTS.—Mr. R. Bowlem, Principal Alto Vocalist, to Christ Church Choir, Harrogate.—Mr. R. H. Hodgson (formerly of Christ Choir, Harrogate, and Lichfield Cathedral Choir) to the Magdalen College Choir, Oxford.—Mr. J. F. Guerin, Alto, to St. Swithin's Church, Cannon Street, E.C.

ORGAN APPOINTMENTS.—Mr. J. W. Cockcroft, to the Parish Church, Churchkirk, near Blackburn.—Mr. J. W. Oxley, Organist and Choirmaster, to the Parish Church, Knaresborough.—Mr. Foster, jun., Organist and Choirmaster, to the Independent Church, Knaresborough.—Mr. T. Stone, of Kensington (Archdeacon Sinclair's), to S. Mary's, Leicester.—Mr. A. Landegran, of S. Mary's, Leicester, has been appointed Organist to the Bishop of Aberdeen.

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